

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 EC BRU 03256 201854Z

73

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03

NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAJ-01 DRC-01

/134 W

----- 093375

R 201715Z MAY 74

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6909

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION OECD PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE EC BRUSSELS 3256

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, XT

SUBJECT: BELGIAN CHRISTIAN LEADER DISCUSSES ETUC CONGRESS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 EC BRU 03256 201854Z

REF: EC BRUSSELS 2964

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ON MAY 20, THE INFLUENTIAL GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE BELGIAN CONFEDERATION OF CHRISTIAN TRADE UNIONS (CSC), JEF HOUTHUYS, TOLD A GROUP OF SIX LABOR ATTACHES OF MISSIONS ACCREDITED TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES THAT HE EXPECTS THE MAY 23-25 ETUC CONGRESS AT COPENHAGEN TO BE UNEVENTFUL. HOUTHUYS FAVORS POSTPONING THE ADMISSION OF THE ITALIAN CGIL TO THE ETUC UNTIL AFTER THE CONGRESS. HE INTIMATED THAT THE CHRISTIAN UNIONS WILL NOT SUPPORT DANISH LEADER THOMAS NIELSEN FOR THE ETUC PRESIDENCY. HE ATTRIBUTED THIS TO NIELSEN'S SUCCESSFUL EFFORT AT THE MAY 9 MEETING OF THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO DENY OBSERVER STATUS TO THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (WCL) AT THE ETUC CONGRESS IN COPENHAGEN. END SUMMARY.

2. HOUTHUYS PREDICTED THAT THE ETUC CONGRESS WILL BE UNEVENTFUL BECAUSE THE MAJORITY OF ETUC LEADERS ARE CONSCIOUS OF THE NEED FOR AVOIDING CONTROVERSIES WHICH COULD CONCEIVABLE LEAD TO SERIOUS POLITICAL DIVISIONS WITHIN THE EXPANDED ETUC. HE SAID THAT SUCH DIVISIONS WOULD RENDER THE ETUC INOPERABLE AND THEREFORE INCAPABLE OF REALIZING ITS POTENTIAL AS A PRIMARY INSTRUMENT FOR ACHIEVING TRADE UNION UNITY IN WESTERN EUROPE. HOUTHUYS, WHO FAVORS CGIL ENTRY, BELIEVES THAT THE DESIRE FOR UNITY IS THE PRINCIPAL REASON WHICH WILL LEAD TO POSTPONING CGIL ADMISSION TO THE ETUC UNTIL SOME TIME AFTER THE CONGRESS. THE CHRISTIAN UNIONS, HE SAID, WILL SUPPORT POSTPONEMENT OF THE CGIL AFFILIATION QUESTION IF PERMITTED TO VOTE ON THE ISSUE.

3. HOUTHUYS WAS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE CHANCES OF ALSO AVOIDING A CONTROVERSY OVER THE ELECTION OF THE NEW ETUC PRESIDENT AT THE CONGRESS. HE IS HOPEFUL THAT SOME KIND OF COMPROMISE CAN BE ARRANGED IN RESOLVING THE QUESTION OF WHO WILL BE THE NEW PRESIDENT ALTHOUGH HE ACKNOWLEDGED THE POSSIBILITY OF A CONTEST BETWEEN NIELSEN AND GEORGES DEBUNNE OF THE BELGIAN FGTB.

4. WHEN ASKED WHAT POSITION THE CSC WOULD TAKE ON DEBUNNE'S CANDIDACY, HE DESCRIBED THE SITUATION AS A "DELICATE" MATTER WHICH HE WOULD CONSIDER AS A LEADER OF THE CSC, AS AN OFFICIAL OF THE WCL AND AS A BELGIAN. THE LABOR ATTACHES PRESENT INTERPRETED THIS AS MEANING THAT HOUTHUYS WOULD SUPPORT DEBUNNE. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 EC BRU 03256 201854Z

5. FORTIFYING THIS ASSUMPTION WAS HOUTHUYS' CRITICISM OF NIELSEN'S ACTION AT THE MAY 9 ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING WHEN NIELSEN INTRODUCED A MOTION DENYING OBSERVER STATUS TO THE WCL ALONG WITH THE COMMUNIST WFTU. THE NIELSEN MOTION WAS APPROVED. ACCORDING TO HOUTHUYS, WHEN MAKING THE MOTION NIELSEN ALLEGEDLY SAID "IF BRUCK (WCL GENERAL SECRETARY JEAN BRUCK) ATTENDS, I WILL NOT."

6. COMMENT. ACCORDING TO ICFTU AND ETUC SECRETARIAT SOURCES THERE IS A MOVE AFOOT TO MAKE NIELSEN PRESIDENT AND DEBUNNE VICE PRESIDENT ALTHOUGH THE POSSIBILITY OF REVERSING THE ORDER IS NOT RULED OUT. THERE IS UNANIMITY IN THE BELIEF THAT THE QUESTION OF CGIL ADMISSION WILL NOT BE MADE AN ISSUE AT THE CONGRESS. GREENWALD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, LABOR UNIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ECBRU03256
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740125-0414
From: EC BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740534/aaaabefo.tel
Line Count: 121
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: EC BRUSSELS 2964
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 MAR 2002 by collinp0>; APPROVED <08 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BELGIAN CHRISTIAN LEADER DISCUSSES ETUC CONGRESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
TAGS: ELAB, XT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005